



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

**Frank J. Magill,
Acting United States Attorney**

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Zimmerman woman charged with health care fraud

A 36-year-old Zimmerman woman was charged yesterday in federal court with one count of health care fraud in connection with fraudulent Medicaid billing practices.

Michelle Barbara Pundt was charged via information June 11 in St. Paul. The charge alleges that from January 2002 to June 2007, she did knowingly and willfully obtain Medicaid funds by false representations made in connection with the delivery of and payment for home health care benefits and services.

Specifically, she allegedly defrauded Medicaid by overbilling the program by more than \$300,000. Pundt allegedly submitted and caused to be submitted Medicaid claims that overstated the private nursing services provided to Medicaid beneficiaries who were clients of Pundt's business, Allied Home Health Care Services.

Medicaid is a federal health care benefit program that began in 1965, and is administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). The program provides medical insurance for individuals whose incomes are insufficient to meet the cost of necessary medical expenses and who satisfy certain eligibility criteria.

If convicted, Pundt faces a potential maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. All sentences are determined by a federal district court judge. This case is the result of an investigation by DHS, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Inspector General and the Minnesota Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Genrich.